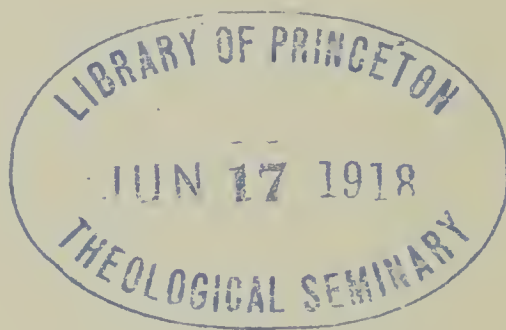


RELIGIOUS REVIVAL AND
SOCIAL BETTERMENT

F. A. ROBINSON

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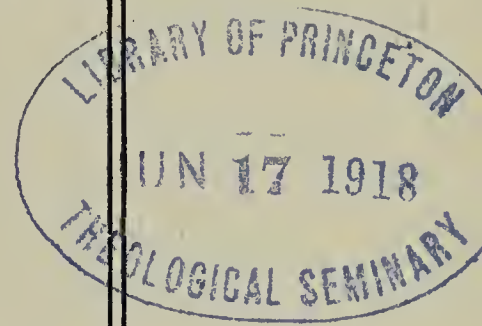
F. A. ROBINSON, M. A.

Author of "Trail Tales of Western Canada"

Libr. of relig. thought.



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To
REV. J. G. SHEARER, D. D.,
SUPERINTENDENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICE AND EVANGELISM,
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA,
FROM WHOSE LIFE AND LIPS THE WRITER HAS
GRATEFULLY LEARNED MANY THINGS.

CONTENTS

	Page
Christ's Test of Discipleship	9
Christ's Example	10
Examples from History	11
Our Duty	12
Who is My Neighbor?	15
A Practical Gospel	17
Providing New Interests in Life	19
The Question of Environment	23
Adequate Remuneration	26
Financial Investment	29
The Claims of the Rich	32
Personal Conversion	33
Personal Conversion is for Service	35
Social Service Leagues	43
The Care of the Body	47
Care of the Child	51
Ministering to the Whole of Life	53

RELIGIOUS REVIVAL AND SOCIAL
BETTERMENT

Religious Revival and Social Betterment

Christ's Test of Discipleship

More knowledge of, and love for Christ means concern for those whom He so loved. That is involved in being a Christ one. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He looked out on the multitude and was moved with compassion, and that compassion expressed itself in service. The weary He made comfortable; the hungry He fed; the sick He healed; to the troubled and anxious ones He brought peace; to the sorely tempted He imparted strength. To those who would follow Him, He says,—“By this shall all men know that ye are My Disciples, if ye have love one to another.” If we are good, we must be good for something, and good to somebody. Christ's test of discipleship forbids the strong to prey on the weak, the few to plunder the many, or the many the few; it means that justice and mercy must be loved and practised, and that men must not live heedless of their fellowmen.

Christ's Example

In studying the records of our Master's life we at once see how intensely concerned He was about the whole life of the people with whom He had to deal. He spent a great deal of His valuable time and strength in concern for the bodily ills of men. True, He stands out as the great spiritual deliverer of all generations, but He also came to His own time as a great physician and as a social reformer. He had an ear open for every wail of sorrow, a heart ready to respond to every species of need. Although we rightfully regard Him as especially the Redeemer of the soul, yet no one can read the story of His life without feeling that He was as emphatically the Saviour of the body. He taught the people; but while teaching He did not neglect to multiply the loaves and fishes in order to satisfy the hunger of the crowd. So it was all through His ministry. The peculiar need of the shrinking woman with the shame-faced disease, the father's cry of anguish for his little daughter, the appeal of the oppressed, the cry of a poor blind beggar, the shriek of pain, the mad cry of the demon-possessed; all these were heard by Him and none were heard in vain.

What relief and reconstruction He sought to bring to the cities He yearned to save! And He wept over them—wept, because He so intensely cared. Stelzle says of some of New York's poor, "They have forgotten how to smile."

Perhaps some of us have forgotten how to weep. Have we ever felt the misery and unrest of sin as a part of our burden, or do we sit at ease in our careless comfort? Are we indifferent to the great loss that sin entails upon our country, and the great loss to Him whose we are? Has the sob ever choked our utterance as it did the utterance of a great patriot as he cried out in behalf of his people, "If Thou wilt, forgive their sin; but if not—blot me out of the book which Thou hast written."

Examples from History

Wonderful indeed, has been the influence of the religion of Jesus Christ on men and nations. Every intelligent reader or student of history knows that nations and empires do not rise to positions of great power and dominion except by the aid of religion. The oft-quoted greatness of the Roman Empire must be investigated in the light of the fact that in its earlier stages that Empire was not less religious than was Israel. Looking at the same Empire later on, none can deny how the early followers of Jesus influenced and leavened its life. Race barriers were broken down, the condition of the poor was bettered, the slave was honored, and the wonderful love of these Christians for each other deeply impressed all observers. And what these Christians stood for has been the most powerful moral lever that ever has been applied to the affairs of men.

All competent historians pay their tribute to the eighteenth century evangelical revival, and more than one has said that it did more to make modern England than all the statescraft of Pitt and all the victories of Wellington. The history of the church in Scotland—the land of revivals—with its “martyrs of the Covenant,” furnishes much information and inspiration on the subject. The name of Chalmers stands in the forefront of those who led the revived Church into practical and effective work for social betterment.

While social betterment is taking on an enlarged meaning at the present time, yet there are other names like Luther, Knox, Wesley, and Whitefield, that are inseparably associated with it; and they are so associated with it because of the clearer vision they received of God—with such a vision a man is bound to be a social reformer, no matter how men may classify him. The cry of a needy world reaches his heart and he responds, “Here am I, send me.”

Our Duty

In this period of nation-making and city-making on the North American continent, we need to watch and work and pray to prevent the insidious growth of those evils that constitute almost paralyzing problems in some other lands and cities to-day. These problems may never be solved, but they will become lesser problems as the young American realizes that his responsi-

bility only ends with his possibility and that great possibilities lie before him.

There is a famous hall in the old world made memorable by countless great utterances, but perhaps no words are cherished more than those of the much-loved Lord Shaftesbury. It was his last speech in the House of Lords. Said the great man, "I feel old age creeping upon me and I am deeply grieved, for I cannot bear to go away and leave the world with so much misery in it." When Shaftesbury finished life's little day, multitudes of the heavy-laden suffered the loss of a friend, and the ragged, poverty-stricken little street arab who said at the funeral, "'E was our Earl," spoke for thousands who felt their champion was gone.

"I am debtor," says the writer to the Romans, "both to the Greeks and to the barbarians." In the light of the social conditions of his time, that is a great, a very great utterance. And again in Ephesians, "We are members one of another." We are bound to the rest of the human race in the compact bundle of life, and the final demonstration of the quality of our religious life must be in our relations to our fellow-men, of whatever type they may be.

In one of our settlement houses where large-hearted men and women are toiling among the poverty stricken and sin-handicapped of the city's centre, a street waif expressed his appreciation of the help being given. "Say teacher," said the little chap whose life had been one of ill-

treatment, "a feller gits a chance here don't he? In the house it's 'git out,' on the street the big feller gits everything, but here everybody gits a chance." In those words the little chap has put the whole case for social effort. That is the foundation principle—to give every individual his or her God-intended chance. So long as its ideals are such as that, Christianity never can become obsolete. If Christianity were merely concerned with the temporary adjustment of certain local wrongs, it would become the religion of a decade or a century. It is unchanging in that it commits itself to eternal principles which are applicable to all ages. The realization of that will save us from any narrow view of our work. The church cannot side either with the employer or the employee. That is, she cannot be exclusively or permanently the champion of either side if she is true to her Lord. Jesus was never the champion of a class. He was the champion of humanity. We must emphasize the fact that men of all ranks should exercise forbearance and sympathy and generosity one toward the other.

Social betterment is to be brought about by a creed that says,—“mine is thine.” The healing word and deed for the social woes of men is,—“what I have, give I thee.” That means sacrifice. Christ's power over the world is not that He preached at it, but that He died for it.

One has said of our own day, “No age has so honestly begun to discern that it is love alone which can speak the last, and perhaps the first

word in the struggle between poverty and wealth, class and class, nation and nation.”

Do we think social service is exclusively associated with great building schemes, with settlement houses, with clubs, with guilds and such like? If we think thus, we unnecessarily deplete the ranks of social workers. Every individual who considers the effect of what he is doing or leaving undone on the general welfare, and sacrifices if need be his private interests, brings himself into the ranks of the nation's social workers. We need what one has termed, “public souls.” Men and women who will get out of the narrowed boundaries of their own little world of preferences and dislikes into the boundless world that God loves.

Who is My Neighbour?

Christ would not allow men to circumscribe limits to their helpfulness. “Who is my neighbour?” was a question He repudiated, because it suggested that some were not the questioner's neighbours. When the parable was ended Christ changed the form of the question and asked, “Which—was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?” The opportunity, not the locality, constitutes the obligation of service. The Fatherhood of God is often more readily acknowledged than the consequent brotherhood of man: but in all our strivings for social betterment the latter is an essential principle—God

has made us neighbours to hundreds and thousands in this land, some are poor, some are rich; some are degraded, some are cultured; some are repulsive, some are attractive; but to all "I am debtor." Yet how little it troubles us to pass by on the other side. Perhaps as in the parable, misery remains unrelieved because it is not clamorous enough. The poor unfortunate man lay half-dead and so the priest had not to listen to earnest appeals to which it might have been difficult to give a positive refusal. Yet those wounds, that helplessness, were appeal enough to a heart of Christlike love.

The Church is not in the world to save itself—peacefully and selfishly to supply its own need,—but to extend its work until all men shall know its Lord. The pastor and officers may have duties that centre around and within a particular organization, but their duties are far wider than the church in which they are called to serve. "Into all the world to every creature," lifts a man beyond and above all local limitations. It makes his field broader than any walls can bound or any streets mark off. Never was it intended that the Church should be separate from the world in any sense that removes its help and sympathy from it. The very function of the church is found in her organic relation to the community and her mission must be all-inclusive. The rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, the employer and the employee, alike claim her services.

The following incident is narrated because social betterment is often taken to mean as already stated, some great organized movement in which only certain ones find it possible to engage. A young member of a Christian Endeavor Society in a midland city is receiving a small salary and out of it partially maintains an invalid parent. The summer's vacation was planned and several months' scanty savings were put away for the much needed holiday. Two weeks before holiday time a poverty-stricken and sickly mother in another part of the city lay untended, except for such help as the wearied husband could give before and after the day's toil. Knowing the circumstances, the girl who belonged to the Christian Endeavor Society, wrote to her holiday companion, "I simply cannot go." A quiet time was spent at home instead of at the distant lakeside. But through that sacrifice an overworked mother is slowly and thankfully recovering because a nurse has tenderly cared for her during the struggle with a serious ailment. To one has come the wonderful joy of service, and to the home of sickness has come the thrill of knowledge that somebody cares. A life fragrant with such deeds is worth a thousand arguments in behalf of Christianity.

A Practical Gospel

On the part of some good people there is what Hugh Price Hughes called an "irritating ten-

dency" to talk about giving "the Gospel" to the oppressed, starving, suffering, destitute people; and yet no real concern is felt about their economic and social condition. It is easy for the well-fed, well-clothed, home-secure individual to "talk" Gospel, but "if a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food," then is the time for more than mere words. There must be deeds of heroic service that will bring relief and liberation.

A good illustration of this non-practical sort of sympathy was given in the British House of Commons some time ago by Mr. Will Crooks who is known to many in the class called "The Submerged Tenth," as "Daddy." He is the father to whom many of these people go with their troubles. During the Dock Strike his speeches were most impressive, but he never carried his audience with him so much as when he spoke in the House on his motion regarding the establishment of a general minimum wage of thirty shillings a week for each adult worker. "All I ask," he said dramatically, "is that the working man shall be treated as a human being and not as a machine. 'Rats on economic conditions' cries the hungry man. 'I want to get food for myself and for my family'," and then Mr. Crooks told the pathetic story of a little girl, who going along the road crying with hunger was met by a well-fed person. "What is the matter, my little dear," the latter asked. The child said she was hungry. "Never mind, God sends bread to fill hungry mouths." "Yes," replied the little girl, "but

He sends the bread to your house and the mouths to ours.”

Pious sentences do not satisfy hungry mouths. The Bible gives the greatest possible prominence to the physical and social needs of men and to what should be the Christian's attitude to these.

Yet we must bear in mind that much help that is called charity is little better than wasted. Our aim in such relief must be not merely to bring comfort, but to produce character. By keeping that thought in view, we shall be discriminative in our charity.

Dr. Russell H. Conwell in his famous lecture “Acres of Diamonds,” tells of being warned not to give anything spendable to a man who used to frequent mission halls and smaller places seeking assistance. One day he succumbed to a pathetic story told him and twelve hours later was taken to task by a judge for having furnished the man mentioned with the means for getting drunk. Valuable property was destroyed by a fire started through the drunkenness of which Dr. Conwell had unwittingly been the cause. No matter how kindly the motive, indiscriminate charity often leads to very much greater evils than those it seeks to alleviate.

Providing New Interests in Life

Then there are the many who, through their own or others' faults, have no inner resources, and who need guidance in profitably occupying

their leisure hours. Absence of helpful, stimulating interests and friendships have caused much of the gambling and drunkenness and vice which we mourn. Not very many suffer for want of food in this land of ours; but even if all have sufficient bread, man cannot live by bread alone. He wants interests in life. By encouraging word, kindly direction and gracious ministry, many may be heartened in the fight. It is wonderful how the eye kindles with a new light, and how the step takes on a new sprightliness when a friendless man finds a friend.

James Whitcomb Riley has put into quaint and homely verse a great truth along these lines:—

When a man hasn't a cent and is
feeling kind of blue,
And the clouds hang dark and heavy
and won't let the sunshine through,
It's a great thing boys, for a neigh-
bour just to lay
His hand upon your shoulder in a
friendly sort of way.

It makes a man feel curious, it makes
the tear-drops start,
And you feel a kind of fluttering in
the region of the heart:
You can't look up and meet his eyes,
you don't know what to say
When his hand is on your shoulder
in a friendly sort of way.

This world's a curious compound
with its honey and its gall,
Its care and bitter crosses, but a
good world after all,
And a good God must have made it,
leastways that is what I say,
When a hand is on my shoulder in a
friendly sort of way.

A man who is now the leader in the work of a certain church, was saved from hopeless despair because a hand was placed on his shoulder and he was assured that one believed in him and would stand by him; for months the one lived for the other. It was an individual effort for an individual, but the redeemed man is now a force in the social betterment of a needy community. So what appears to be an individual effort, is often a ministry to the multitude.

The same thing applies to many of the lads of our great cities. They have no healthy, helpful interests in life. Left to themselves, they drifted into bad gangs that are often a menace to the community. Even the formation of "gangs" shows that these boys are naturally fond of organization and discipline, and such organization would save many a lad from adult criminality. One writes: "Effective treatment of the juvenile delinquent would eliminate perhaps fifty percent of our adult crime. William Healey, in his *Individual Delinquent*, makes the assertion that the principal age for recruiting into

the ranks of criminal life is between fifteen and twenty. 'In connection with the early impetus given to the Reformatory movement in England during the conferences of 1851, 1853, and 1861, a number of direct observations were reported. Clay, in a communication to the Earl of Shaftesbury, stated that he found fifty-eight per cent of criminals were dishonest before they were fifteen years old. Fourteen per cent became so between fifteen and sixteen, and that all of them had shown their anti-social tendencies before they were nineteen or twenty.' It is apparent that the effectual treatment of the juvenile delinquent would depopulate the prisons twenty years from now."

Religious revival sees a duty and patriotic privilege in service for just such lads. Wise workers redirect the gang spirit. What was once a dynamic for evil becomes a dynamic for good. Henry Drummond said: "Call a boy, a boy, which he is, and ask him to sit still, and there is no power in the world can make him do it. Call him a soldier or a man, which he is not, and place a ten cent cap on his head and you can order him about at will." He has been given new interests, and a sense of responsibility is born within him. The discipline of such classes or clubs, the inculcation of fairness in games, even the practical influence of the bath, all combine in the uplifting process. Going back to their homes they take new and cleansing influences and impart at least some knowledge that is a contribution to the

happiness of the family. A boy is not won to goodness by sending him to jail—"When you seek to win a boy," says that friend of delinquent boys, Judge Lindsay, "go after his heart." That method has succeeded where all others have failed.

The Question of Environment

In our effort for social betterment we need to remember that environment is a factor of tremendous importance in the making of character. Jacob J. Riis, after long and intimate acquaintance with the children of the slums, said, "Environment counts for ninety per cent." Several years later he added, "make it ninety-nine per cent." At least it is certain that thousands of children of poor heredity rescued from the slums and transferred to a favorable environment, have become good and helpful citizens. What handicaps poisonous air, immoral surroundings, tumble-down and badly ventilated dwellings are in the development of nobility of character. Dr. Paterson Smyth speaks of the inevitable degradation of those who are "packed in one reeking chamber" with blasphemy and obscenity ever to be heard through the thin partitions on either side. Settlement and other city workers again and again find men and women herded together in tenements in such a way as to make decency and virtue almost impossible. Dwelling places abound where men and women are living and sleeping the year round amidst unspeakable filth

and vice. Degeneration is absolutely unavoidable in such environments.

In an Eastern city the medical health officer reported that as many as ten people were living in one room with no attempt at ventilation. Another report from a city of fifty thousand, says fifteen Polacks were found, eating, cooking and sleeping in one small room amongst filth and stench that the investigators found unendurable. In another city one hundred and fifty-six Austrians were found living in a ten-roomed house. Even a limited personal experience shows one what cruelty, crime, and depths of infamy may be found in such abodes,—evils which pen scarcely can exaggerate. Under these conditions where squalid poverty and unblushing lawlessness abound, families are being reared which create environments that defy the church and threaten the foundations of the State. Such conditions must be remedied as we endeavor to reform men and women: otherwise, we leave them where it is well-nigh impossible for them to be even commonly decent, and where “wrinkled in body and mind, the light is flickering out in their souls.”

A short time ago we looked over a vast grimy desert of houses, with dingy rubbish-filled yards and lanes. Every roof covers two, three or more families of working people. These people must work until they break down or die. We call them hopeless—these sin-mailed men and women—but faithful, loving service has shown that all are capable of responding to influences

which call out ambition and love, and some of these "hopeless" ones have to-day become the glory of the community.

Those of us who are engaged in the work of Social Service and Evangelism, believe in the power of the gospel—not a gospel of theory, but a gospel that can be preached in a practical way to these hungry, wretched multitudes, and poor, neglected, starving children. No depravity is beyond the reach of Christian love. The trouble lies largely in the fact that in the past we did not get near enough to these people either in a physical or a spiritual sense. It is not a satisfactory method to plant "missions" in their midst, and have people come in for a few hours service each week. We are, from the view point of these downcast people, too much removed from them in any such work. Earnest people, not too long but too exclusively have prayed for these suffering ones, prayed with tear-stained faces—but the prayer that is most needed is the prayer that wears out the soles quicker than the knees. What is needed is a love that manifests itself through the human touch. Christ entered the city with its wretchedness. He touched the open sore with His own hands, and that is the lesson we have been slow to learn—the need of the personal Christlike touch.

There are probably many of our city churches where this class of people would be welcome, but the very location, and in some cases, the extravagant furnishings, forbid their entrance. It is not

enough to say, "Oh well that should not be so; they ought to be willing to go to these churches." The fact is they do not go, and if as a New York preacher says, Mulberry Street will not go to Fifth Avenue, Fifth Avenue must be willing to go to Mulberry Street, or to its vicinity. As workers for God, we are to be aggressive, and must use every effort to bring these people into the healthy atmosphere of a working, active, Christian Church. By that means we may hope to bring about their permanent reformation. Splendid service along these lines is being rendered by certain of our city churches. Necessarily, the process of reclamation of these districts will be slow, but the people reached will carry back to their homes transforming influences.

Adequate Remuneration

Many of our people, whose lives have been religiously quickened and enriched, are holding and are going to hold more of America's wealth than is actually needed for their own sustenance and comfort. As employers, what is going to be their attitude towards the employee? Is a writer correct when he says, "People who call themselves Christians have used labor and then thrown men and women aside as they throw old machines on a scrap heap?" And some who have done the "throwing" are much burdened by their many goods, which the rejected toiler has helped to produce; and in the process of production the

toiler's remuneration has been such that to provide for the evil day was an impossibility.

As we write these lines, a great city is stirred by a spectacular and turbulent upheaval. The events just preceding the days of the French Revolution have been re-enacted. The oppression of high prices for the necessities of life has become so insufferable to the poor, that they have arisen in tumultuous revolt. A newspaper report is as follows:

Crying, 'we want bread, we want bread,' more than three thousand women, bareheaded, scantily clad—their warmest garment being a shawl thrown about their shoulders—stormed up the steps of the City Hall here to-day, demanding relief from the Mayor from the high cost of food. Most of the women carried babies in their arms, their faces showing the pinch of hunger. Within a few minutes a crowd of thousands had gathered in the City Hall Park watching the demonstration. 'We are starving! We want bread!' was the constant cry raised by the women, as they surged about the entrance to the City Hall. They swept up the steps en masse. The doors were banged shut in their faces, and wild cries and imprecations follows.

In London, until war improved labor conditions, it is said that one million, eight hundred thousand people had just one week's wages between them and starvation. Such inadequate remuneration doubtless has hastened the process of moral and physical degeneration. Certain things are requisite to normal, healthy living and the neglect of them means social loss and ultimate social wreckage. There is absolute proof easily discoverable to show that some employers have paid a wage that was not a living wage and that they appeared quite indifferent as to how the balance was to be obtained, even to the extent of the loss of character and virtue on the part of the toiler.

A few months before these words were penned, a girl of good character approached the manager of the department in which she was a clerk. She informed him that it was impossible to get along honestly on the small salary she was receiving, and asked if an advance would be possible. In a brutally insinuating way he asked her a question which suggested other ways of augmenting her income. A few days later the young man to whom the girl was engaged met the manager on the street and quoting the request and answer above referred to, in order to have its accuracy verified, pounded the face of the one who insulted a modest young girl so that for a week the manager was, as the young man said, "laid off for repairs." The girl was admitted to be efficient and the salary was admitted to be

insufficient, yet the firm could go on piling up its profits, making the already rich proprietors richer, while clerks could be left to live indecently in order to dress decently.

Where employers' hearts are untouched by the principles of the Gospel, reforms that threaten financial interests, are made exceedingly difficult. Much education is still needed to bring about a sense of our joint social responsibilities which will result in the sympathetic treatment of those who in many cases are maintaining us in our comfort and luxury.

Financial Investment

Genuine religious revival will also cause people of means to see that money which they have placed in the hands of agents or companies, is invested in ways that will bring no discredit to the cause of Christ. Ignorance as to this may mean that people who say, "Lord, Lord," are backing financially the enemies of their professed Lord. An indifference to anything but the interest on their investment has been found again and again in the lives of prominent Christian workers.

One of the vilest dens of vice in a western mining town was owned by a woman teaching a bible class two thousand miles Eastward. She was delighted with the fifteen per cent on her money which the agent forwarded regularly, and not having enquired as to how her capital was invested, she did not know that the revenue

was the rent of a house in which the lives of hundreds of young men and women were becoming a menace morally and physically to any community in which they might reside.

In another instance, a superintendent of a city Sabbath School had over forty thousand dollars invested in a bookstore on the shelves of which were books so obscene and immoral that no man of decency could narrate their contents even to an audience of men only, and they have since been put on the proscribed lists of British and American countries.

It is amazingly sad how many people can re-adjust their convictions when income is affected. By a selfish process of reasoning, black becomes grey and grey becomes white, until the most outrageous crimes against society are committed with an undisturbed and untroubled conscience.

We never can expect to render our gospel attractive if the world sees that we are the children of greed. Does the personnel of the church impress the world as playing the game, as living the life? Do our deeds tally with our profession, or are we playing a dual role by seeking to live the higher life on Sunday and the lower life on week days?

Henry Drummond used to say that what the church needed was not so much more members as a better brand of members. There was some point to the remark of a Welsh minister who at the time of the great revival was asked if it had reached his church. "Yes," was the reply.

“Did you have many additions?” “No, but I thank the Lord we had some subtractions.” “The people that are with thee are too many,” was Jehovah’s message to Gideon; and when there had been eliminated from the Israelitish army over thirty-one thousand timid and careless men, Gideon’s band of three hundred with God, was invincible.

And *with God* man is still able to do the seemingly impossible things. If our so-called Christianity seems to some lacking in vitality and power it is because as one has said we have substituted “churchianity” for Christianity, and organizations, instead of Christ, have become the central figure.

Wherever it has been given a fair test, Christianity has shown itself able to redeem all types of human failure and to restore lost order. During a great controversy the late General William Booth was asked by a reporter, “General, do you think Christianity is played out?” With that characteristic half-snarl which at times he used so effectively, the great leader in social betterment replied, “Played out? young man, Christianity hasn’t been played *in* yet.” Through his work for the masses in the great cities, he became acquainted with such heart-rending conditions as are pictured in his *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, and he knew that many who professed Christianity, possessed little of it.

Investigation to-day reveals many of the same appalling conditions. Who can look at some city

blocks without feeling the cruelty of the thing? Usually they have been built by men of wealth, often nominal Christians, and the owners have given little attention to their erection or they could never have imposed such murderous discomforts on their tenants. No thought was given to the effect on precious lives that must be lived where fresh air and sunshine were walled out. Such conditions, with other involved handicaps, recall Charles Kingsley's terrible language, that some children are "damned from their birth." Humanly speaking, they are so heavily handicapped in the race of life that their fate is settled before they start.

The Claims of the Rich

Nor is social betterment service for the poor only. The rich have very special claims on us. Ruskin has pointed out how the tendency is to lavish all our resources and all our sympathies upon the degraded and from the human viewpoint, the worthless. But we listen to one of West London's world-known workers, as he pleads the needs of the occupants of the houses beautiful. He says of his own city, which is probably true of many others, "The wealthiest classes of our society are at the present moment the most immoral and the most miserable," and he speaks of their corrupt and degraded forms of amusement, showing how their wealth and luxury have bred callousness.

In reaching the wealthy classes through religious revival, we set great material resources free for social betterment. Many consecrated people well equipped to help the masses are unable to give such assistance because they are without financial resources. The man of wealth may have the privilege of sending willing feet up garret stairs and into gloomy basements where a practical ministry may tell much in community betterment. A score of helpful institutions could be listed, any one of which would allow his idle money to earn for him human dividends that would enrich him for time and eternity.

And he who serves his brother best,
Gets nearer God than all the rest.

Personal Conversion

Let us never forget that "The improvement of the soul is the soul of all improvement." The gospel is individual first, and social second. Many outside the church are preaching a social gospel that they think may be realized apart from personal conversion: but no matter how enthusiastically it may be gone about, the construction of a noble society is impossible apart from noble people. As Herbert Spencer writes, we "cannot bring golden conduct out of leaden instincts."

Paul says the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Now that word salvation is not such

a word as men use when they say, "sanitary dwellings would be the salvation of the masses." The word as Paul uses it is bigger than any of the tinkering little schemes that many men devote their time to. For while social service must bring about reforms in many phases of life, yet we do not and cannot save the masses merely by teaching them habits of cleanliness. By all means let us preach a social Christianity—that is a Christianity that can be applied to social conditions, a Christianity that deals with proper housing and clothing and proper civic conditions; but we must never fail to realize that the disease is deeper than can be reached by these external remedies, and it is ordinarily true that if a man's heart is cleansed, and he is provided with new and uplifting friendships, he will soon begin to clean up his house. That has been the experience of every Christian worker among the masses.

If the gospel is preached in its fulness it cannot fail to impress people with its all embracing reforms. It is intended to permeate all departments of life, cleansing and sweetening every relationship and manifesting its power in the home as well as in the church. Incidentally, the gospel of Jesus Christ is good for the real estate man and for the builder. Many a man has been content in his poverty and dirt until the gospel brought an enrichment of life which meant cleaner thoughts and higher ambitions. With Christ in possession of a life, the suburban villa often has been substituted for the slum den. Religious

revival means the transformation of the man, and the transformation of the man, means social betterment because the transformed life soon sets about the transformation of unlovely surroundings.

Personal Conversion is for Service

How often do those within the church make the mistake of thinking that personal conversion is the final end. The divorce of personal Christianity and social Christianity is not of Christ. We must seek the reconstruction of society in every department of life upon a Christian basis, wherever that has not already been done. "As My Father hath sent Me even so send I you," was the commission of the Master to His disciples; and that commission has in it a glorious song of freedom. "What a wide and inclusive emancipation" says Jowett, is contained in that passage, "He hath sent me to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Social Service to be of permanent uplift, must have definite evangelistic values, and Evangelism must express itself in Social Service. To separate the one from the other will bring irreparable loss. Nor must evangelism be confined to individuals alone; to do so is to place a grievous limitation on its purpose and function. On the other hand,

what we regard as community effort must not be carried on without regard to the individual. The individual and the community are interdependent. The Church doubtless has created a justifiable prejudice on the part of some because she seemed lacking in enthusiasm toward community welfare. One writer tells of a man who stood apart from church work for years, but who on seeing a program that meant an interest in social welfare, said, "I have cut out the church for years, but if it is going to do vital community service, count me in." The same writer tells of a social service meeting in a United States town. A leading socialist critic was present. Knowing his attitude to the church, the audience was amazed to hear him declare, "If you church men really mean to take up this program, I will go with you to the end of the road."

Some time ago, the writer was conducting a meeting in a theatre, and illustrated what the church was doing in applied Christianity for the needs of great cities and the classes that heretofore had been largely neglected. The manager of the theatre came and said, "If this is the kind of work you are doing, I want a hand in it. A lot of your church performances don't appeal to me, but this kind of thing does." A little later he handed the writer an envelope containing one hundred dollars with a note stating that more would be forthcoming whenever any special need was made known.

If we deal only with individuals while the forces of evil organize the community to destroy youth, it is almost as Dr. Craft says,—“Like trying to make saints in hell,” or as Gypsy Smith said in Chicago, it is, “being content to sing hymns within the glow of stained-glass windows with hellish conditions unchecked outside.” We organize rescue missions to reach the down-and-out men and while we are reaching the few, the conditions under which such people live and work, are wrecking the many. Yet even within the church it is often unpopular to fight organized vice. In a new western town when a preacher launched forth in rebuke of a colony of vice, a prominent church member stepped up to him at the close of the service and shaking his fist in his face, said, “D—— you, if you don’t leave these people alone, we will make it so hot for you that you will have to get out of this place within twenty-four hours. We do business with these people and our bread and butter is in it.” Such men as that are quite willing for the church to act the part of the Good Samaritan. But religious revival for them must not go to the root cause of social misery and suffering if that will in any way disturb their financial interests.

For all time there will probably be need for the Good Samaritan type of effort, but surely we cannot fail to see the need of cleaning up the highway that is infested with robbers. If we so fail, then social service may become an effort to heal the sores of warring humanity without

stopping the war. We are going to *save* men which is much better than to *rescue* them. H. F. Ward tells of a leader in another church going to a minister who was fighting vice in his neighborhood and saying, "Stick to your job of preaching the gospel," and that very week a daughter of one of their own families was ruined in one of the houses the minister had been seeking to suppress. We must not be content to attack social evils merely with sermons and rescue homes.

The following item recently appeared in a pamphlet issued by the International Reform Bureau:

The State which had the greatest and most numerous revivals during two years, made the worst record of any in the subsequent temperance vote of its legislature. If that bell does not ring loud enough to bring pastors and evangelists together for earnest conference on how to change all that, the more recent change of eighty thousand votes to the bad in a city election after the greatest modern revival, should show that something is needed for bettering moral conditions besides the evangelist's faithful attacks on drink and gambling and impurity as personal vices.

There must be a massing of the religious forces so that united attack may be made on the underlying causes which produce such destruction.

A waitress who served the writer during a conference of religious workers in a Western town, told of her own experience in earning her livelihood and a part of her statement given in her exact words follows: "I worked in—(a large departmental store) for nearly two years. I know a lot of the girls there are bad, but they do not get enough pay to live decently. My wages were three dollars and fifty cents a week for a long time. My next position was at—— (a well-known dry goods firm). When they gave me piece work I could make fair wages; but as soon as you make good wages, the prices are cut down. Then I went as waitress in the —— Apartments. I was put in a dingy, dirty little room in the basement or cellar right next to the coal-bin. The people I waited on were decent or I would not have stayed; but really life was so unpleasant that if it had not been for my belief in a hereafter, I would have taken to a very different life. How would you like to room in a cellar with blue mould on the walls and things in your room? Than I came west. I started working at the —— Hotel over on —— Street. I was dismissed because I would not live a fast life. But really, sir, nobody seems to care very much about us—there are a good many more ready to pull you down than to help you up."

The incident is typical of many that might be given.

Now what can the religiously-revived do to better such conditions? The individual moving alone, unassociated with his fellow-worker, cannot accomplish what an aggregate of individuals may. For when human beings merge together in a group, there is something infinitely larger and more effective than the same number of people working along individual lines.

In a town of eight thousand inhabitants an organization of women was formed following a religious revival. Quietly and without any public announcements, these women determined that not a girl in that town should justly say she was friendless. By careful and systematic planning, each district had its sub-committee so that every home with girl occupants was accounted for. Girls coming to town were quickly introduced into helpful associations, girls leaving town were cared for in the same way through correspondence. Through hospitality and serious effort, to provide happily for the leisure of all who would avail themselves of the privileges offered, many a girl was saved from flippancy or despair. Within three months five girls confessed that the help given had saved them from disgraceful living.

One who had been in a much better position in her home land across the Atlantic, told of her lonely life in another town. She had a dreary room that was partly used for storage purposes.

There was never any time for reading or recreation. Her Sundays were only occasionally partly free, and even these brought no touch of light into the gloom. "I went into every church in town by turn, and I can honestly say that during six months I never received a friendly word. One night I saw three young men in the vestibule of the —— church and I asked if I could be shown to a seat. Without saying a word, one of them jerked his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the aisle and that was the nearest approach to friendliness I was shown. Many a Sunday night I have gone down the street to my lonely room with my eyes filled with tears. Lighted windows everywhere, but not one home into which I had been asked or felt free to go."

To the President of the organization above mentioned she spoke her gratitude for the kindly interest that had brightened her pathway and given her new heart in her new place of abode; and, in turn, she joined the forces for doing for other strangers what had so gladdened her own life.

The girls befriended by such an organization should be led to understand that the interest taken is a permanent and practical thing. Where injustice is suffered, the organization should seek tactfully to bring its remedying influence to bear. For instance, one girl reported that in the cloak-making department in which she worked, the foreman was making life wretched for some

of the girls. If there was resentment over his approaches, it meant dismissal.

The general manager of the business was believed to be courteous and reasonable, and after full and careful gathering of the facts, the information was given to two prominent Christian citizens who were at the head of influential bodies. These gentlemen called upon the manager and giving full particulars but withholding names, assured him that if necessary, affidavits would be furnished, but that for obvious reasons the complainants greatly desired that their names should not be divulged. After kindly conference, it was agreed that the general manager should send a letter to departmental managers and foremen throughout the establishment, stating that while he had the fullest confidence in most of his associates, yet certain complaints had reached him and he trusted there would be no further occasion for such a letter as he was then sending. The delegation was asked to report again if the letter did not bring about the desired effect. Fortunately, the conditions were changed immediately and a letter was sent the general manager assuring him of the deep gratitude and sincere appreciation of the complainants and wishing him the success such interest in his employees deserved.

While it is a little outside the purpose of this narration yet in view of what has been written it is only fair to say that many managers and fore-

men are all that could be desired in their consideration of workers.

A department manager recently assured us that the standard wage throughout his firm's many branches, was amply sufficient for the needs of the clerks and that an individual must be advanced in salary if capable. As a manager he was obliged to make his department pay but not at the expense of insufficiently remunerated assistants. "If we know any girl to be careless as to character, we deal as kindly with her as possible and reliable fellow-workers are asked to get her into helpful associations. When a clerk is sick, all necessary care is furnished, and additional financial assistance is given for at least a few weeks."

In another store where a customer had become annoyed at a waitress because she declined his invitations to visit him in his boarding-house and had therefore manifested his displeasure by unjust complaints regarding the service rendered, the manager gallantly defended the girl and requested the man to get his meals elsewhere as they thought too much of their employees to ask them to wait on men of his type.

Social Service Leagues

In another town, following a religious revival, a number of men formed themselves into an organization known as "The Community Betterment League." For years there had been toler-

ated certain social evils, all of which were known to be a menace to the safety of the youth of that town, yet nothing had been done to put a stop to these evils. An awakened public conscience caused the people to unite in an effort to make it easier for the young people to do right, and harder to do wrong. Without undue publicity, the local situation was considered and discussed. One or two tactful men were appointed to interview the law-breakers. Quietly and wisely they talked over the legal and moral aspects of the case with these law-breaking fellow-citizens. They appealed to them on the grounds of good citizenship and patriotism and explained that they felt it better to be above board in telling them that the organization they represented meant business and that the town must be cleared as far as possible of those things that were injurious to its good name. Without any threatening, they informed them that they had absolute proof of illegal acts and that they earnestly desired the assurance that such acts would be discontinued. The interview was effective.

Ordinarily such a course will bring about the desired reform but where there is open defiance or a refusal to listen to reasonable appeals, then the law should be vigorously enforced. It is no argument against such procedure to say that people cannot be made good by legislation. There can be no effective denial of the fact that a good law well enforced makes evil dangerous and

unprofitable, and thus the community is made morally safer.

It is a poor type of evangelism that is indifferent to the presence of civic abominations. To be deeply moved by a religious revival is only of permanent value as the emotions are translated into deeds. In still another town, a different type of effort was productive of great helpfulness. Christian people planned to give certain rescued men a chance to get a home property of their own. Here is how it worked out in one life.

The man in question had lived a godless, reckless life for fifteen years. An indulged passion for alcohol had ruined all his prospects and made his dwelling a place of wretchedness for the entire family. How fearful had been the nightly homecoming to children and mother for many a year. When a religious revival was brought about, an impression was made on this whiskey-soaked man. To one who took a kindly interest in him, he tearfully confessed his own helplessness and his longing to have things different. His burden of sin was laid at the foot of the Cross. New friendships were provided, a position was procured and in a few weeks there was a marked change internally and externally.

After conferring with the regenerated man, a small house with enough garden to occupy usefully many leisure hours, was procured. An agreement was drawn up giving the man the privilege of paying so much a month partly as interest on the money advanced and partly as payment on

the principal. In case of sickness or enforced idleness there would be no danger of loss of payments, and rent day would no longer bring threats of ejection. The sense of ownership brought the keenest interest and enthusiasm into the man's life. Half-holidays and evenings were devoted to the improvement of the property and with genuine pride he would point out what had been done and what was contemplated. No charity had been dispensed—the man had only been helped to help himself. The self-respect which he had long since lost was restored, and he has now taken a worthy place in the community's life.

The family, which gave every promise of becoming a burden on society, is now a valuable asset, every one of the seven members bringing credit to the home and town. The simple answer of the mother revealed much of what had taken place when a former employer called to see if she could do a day's washing, "Joe doesn't like me to take in washing now" was the response uttered in a tone of humble pride. Once, through long weary days she had been left to struggle on as best she could with a brutal husband that added to her burdens until with body and heart alike well nigh broken, she had been dragged down to an indifference as to the cleanliness or tidiness of herself, her children or her abode.

Then gladly she had confessed her purpose to live the new life her husband had chosen, and soon with soul and body alike rested, she joined

in the transformation of the home. It was the new sense of the responsibility of man for man brought about by a religious revival that wrought the social betterment in that community. "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ," had been heard and heeded.

The Care of the Body

Zealous men sometimes advise the church to keep clear of anything that is not "definitely spiritual" and so they would leave the care of the human body to other organizations. Yet only those who have heard the voice of the One who taught His followers the infinite value of the body, can realize its possibilities as the temple of the Holy Ghost. If it is no concern to us what is the physical condition of those about us, we are certainly not following the example of Him whom we call Master.

Look at the poor emaciated toilers in some city attics! See the bloodless faces and the sad despairing eyes! Life is for some of them an hourly struggle for bread. The body is never really fit for life's tasks. No wonder many succumb to evil. They are so physically enfeebled that the power of resistance has almost gone. Is it any wonder that looking upon the well-dressed, well-fed church goers, some of whom have been enriched beyond their needs, the half-starved, poorly-clothed, badly-housed toiler feels

bitterness of spirit because none of these professing Christians seem to care.

“Don’t talk to me about religion, there ain’t any.” These words were spoken a few years ago to a student missionary by a sewing woman in a New York tenement house. It was the first visit of its kind that she had had for several years. “I never rest,” she continued, “my fingers are always going; I’ve never asked for a cent but what I’ve earned. A few years ago, with the help of the children, I used to be able to make a dollar a day, and we got along pretty well; then prices were cut down and we made only ninety cents; then eighty-five and eighty, and now all we can make working at least fourteen hours a day is seventy-five cents. I used to say, ‘It’s God’s world. He’s running things and it must be all right somehow;’ but I don’t now; things aren’t right.”

Then those eyes that were sunk far into the sockets, flashed upon the visitor as with voice trembling with mingled pathos and anger she said,—“there are men who chuckle when they find a new way of bleeding a cent out of a starving woman and her children. What do the churches care about us, except to wear some of the half-paid-for things we make.”

The condemnation was not altogether deserved, but it is one instance out of many that might be given showing the gulf that has come between some people and the church.

It is beyond all dispute that the strategic point in the contest against wickedness, is in the modern great city. Here the revolutions are bred; here the faces of the poor are often ground; here may be found the modern Shylocks with their cursed sweatshops; here rises the bitter cry of the unemployed, and the wail of the thousands who receive little more than starvation wages. True, some of these are more the victims of their own sinful folly than of the injustice of others, but a vast number of these sin-mauled and poverty-marked people have not had a "square deal." And because every thoughtful, optimistic man must feel that the hope of humanity is in the salvation of these people, the Church must face her responsibility in this matter.

Is it an exaggerated statement when one says, "Slaughter marks the course of modern industry"? How many deaths in factories, shops, and mines have been caused by the penuriousness of companies and other economic injustices. Only under the compulsion of the government have some corporations given even ordinary protection to their workmen.

Or think of the record of adulterated foods! Eminent physicians state that through unfit food by far more babies have been slain than are thrown into the Ganges.

A shipwreck with the sacrifice of one thousand, six hundred, and thirty-five lives was spectacular and terribly tragic—a world was thrilled with sorrow when the wires flashed around the globe

the story of the disaster. Yet the health bulletins tell us that in the United States one thousand, seven hundred, and eighty lives are lost every day by preventable diseases, and many thousands are bearing their burden of unnecessary pain and so are rendered unfit for life's battle. Surely the sacrifice of these one thousand, seven hundred, and eighty lives daily is not less tragic even though not as spectacular.

In a Canadian city during a recent summer month, eighteen thousand, nine hundred, and seventy-four pounds of meat and fish being offered for sale, was confiscated as absolutely unfit for food. Milk to the quantity of two thousand, one hundred, and fifty quarts was also rejected. Yet the inspectors do not by any means discover all such efforts to make money at the expense of the murder of the innocent.

The human body is the masterpiece of God's creative power, and religious revival ought to mean a revival of interest in God's sublimest work. To attempt to break life up into sections and label one secular and the other sacred and to seek to perpetuate such a division is to prevent the answer to the prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

But the better day is dawning. Conservation is one of this century's big words that has been applied too exclusively to natural resources such as timber limits and mines. But of how little value these natural assets would be apart from a race of honest, industrious men and women.

So earnest workers are seeking to emphasize the value of *persons*. The conservation of orphans, of children who are well-nigh cursed with parents who are incapable, means that such handicapped and neglected ones may have an opportunity to develop into healthful, useful men and women. Homes there are in which the atmosphere is so vice-and-crime producing that the offspring are robbed of moral ideas and ideals.

Care of the Child

In the United States, two and one quarter million children under fifteen years of age are employed in various ways. There are murderous dwellings in which every member of the family down to three years of age, is enlisted in work. Children of three years can and do straighten out tobacco leaves and assist in the making of artificial flowers. At four years of age, they can put covers on paper boxes. At five and six they are able to sew on buttons. At eight to twelve many girls are engaged in finishing trousers. Sometimes the bargains for which people scramble are the product of these little oppressed lives. Medical examination has made it very plain that wherever children have been made to work during these tender years, they were found to be physically inferior to those who were not robbed of their heritage.

One who has studied child life in the cities has written the following pathetic lines:

See you not how the wild rose
 weeps unkissed,
And how the violets from the hill-
 side fade
While child lips wither in the
 factory smoke,
How the brook creeps away to song-
 less death
For the lost dance of child eyes
 bound to wheels?

Play is the child's birthright. Yet only recently did towns and cities begin to think of adequately providing for the play life of the child. The social wreckage that involves so much effort to-day, may be lessened by more thought and work in behalf of the boys and girls, and it is far better "to erect the fence above the precipice than to have the ambulance below." Better to *save* than to *rescue*.

The city of Chicago had, up to 1912, spent thirteen million dollars on playgrounds and those who are able to speak with authority say no better investment was ever made. In 1916 the same city spent one million dollars for a like purpose. During that year, three hundred and fifty-six thousand, five hundred and forty-eight people used the Seward Park group of playgrounds. The cost of the maintenance of this group was twenty-two thousand dollars which meant a cost of six cents per individual. The Magistrates in the districts state that the de-

crease in crime resultant from the Park system is thirty per cent.

Religious revival accompanied by social betterment in our towns and cities ought also to mean a far-sighted policy of open spaces and parks; and, in the meantime everything possible should be done to at least alleviate the conditions and to teach these children of unequal opportunity how by and by to earn their bread, and thus avoid the inefficiency of later years, which is the cause of so much unemployment and poverty and even of crime.

An honest community must discharge its obligation to such children as these whose whole view of life has become through their parents' sin, or through social injustice, perverted.

Ministering to the Whole of Life

In some towns and cities efforts are now being made which seem destined more effectively to relate the church's work to the practical problems and needs of men. One report from a city in the United States tells how earnest workers are seeking to meet the "terribly serious situation" and to touch the crowds that the church had in former years practically failed to reach. Men and women "are getting a new conception of the significance of the Gospel." Clean amusements and educational opportunities are abundantly furnished. There are many meetings; but meetings are only a part of the work, and the effort to

touch these people at every point in their lives, seven days in the week is being successful. The ministry of mercy is to become as penetrating as sin and sorrow, so that no one shall truthfully say, "no man careth for my soul."

Such work as this, and of other organizations and institutions is not a substitute for salvation by faith in Christ, but it is an expression of this salvation as a demonstration to the world that we are indeed His disciples.

